



Ministry of Tourism



# Tourism Industry welcomes the schemes announced by the Ministry of Finance for augmenting the tourism sector in fight against COVID-19 pandemic



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Union Finance Minister Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman announced the relief package Rs 6,28,993 crore to support Indian economy in fight against COVID-19 pandemic on 28th June 2021. The financial support to revive tourism in the country was announced with support to many other sectors to stimulate the economic growth.

## **Scheme for Travel and Tourism Stakeholders and Registered Tourist Guides**

*Financial support to more than 11,000 registered Tourist Guides / Travel and Tourism Stakeholders.* Under the new Loan Guarantee Scheme for Covid Affected Sectors, working capital / personal loans will be provided to people in tourism sector to discharge liabilities and restart after being impacted due to COVID-19. The scheme will cover 10,700 Regional Level Tourist Guides recognised by the Ministry of Tourism and Tourist Guides recognised by the State Governments and Travel and Tourism Stakeholders (TTS) recognized by the Ministry of Tourism. TTS's will be eligible to get a loan upto Rs. 10 lakh each while tourist guides can avail loan upto Rs 1 lakh each. There will be no processing charges, waiver of foreclosure / prepayment charges and no requirement of additional collateral. Scheme to be administered by the Ministry of Tourism through NCGTC.

## **Free Tourist Visa to 5 Lakh Tourists**

As per the announcement, once Visa issuance is restarted, the first 5 lakh Tourists Visas will be issued free of charge. The benefit of free of charge visa will be available only once per tourist during the issuance of the first 5 lakh tourist visas (free of charge visas). The scheme will be applicable till 31st March 2022 or till 5,00,000 visas are issued, whichever is earlier.

## **Ministry of Finance gives concurrence to release SEIS scrips on 16.06.2021**

Ministry of Finance has given concurrence to release SEIS scrips on 16.06.2021. Earlier, several Industry stakeholders had flagged appeals to the government to release SEIS Scrips for 2019-20 and DGFT had put a detailed proposal for the allocation for SEIS for exports made during 2019-20. Taking

all circumstances into account, the Department of Expenditure, Ministry of Finance has given concurrence to the proposal of Department of Commerce for continuation of SEIS for 2019-20 with a financial allocation of Rs.2061 crores subject to the condition that the amount will be provided through Expenditure Budget following the procedure of providing a New Minor Head.



These above moves are expected to immensely help the stakeholders in the sector by providing them much required liquidity and gear up for the operations in near future. Similarly, it is also expected to provide much needed relief to the government approved tourist guides who have been affected by the ongoing slowdown in the sector due to the pandemic.



**in** Tourism Industry welcomed these measures announced by the Government. “The tourism focussed announcements are very welcome. This is a step in the right direction. We however do request that the sum of Rs 10 lakhs be increased. The industry has been damaged very deeply and we need greater support not only to survive but to work on recovery. On the Visas, a very good gesture, but let us show the world the true spirit of Atithi Devo Bhava and make it free for all till December 2022. Today’s announcements are a positive start for sure, but more assistance is needed very quickly to help with our recovery” opined Rajeev Kohli, Joint Managing Director, Creative Travel & Past Senior Vice Present IATO and Vice Chairman ICPB

Mr. Rajiv Mehra, President, Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO), the apex association of tour operators in the country said “We are grateful to the Prime Minister and Finance Minister for giving some relief to the tourism industry including 5 lakh free visas applicable till 31st March 2022, whenever visas are open, and we are grateful to the Tourism Minister for supporting the industry, giving relief to the affected sector including Tour Operators and registered tourist guides in tourism sector. IATO thanked the Government for considering loan to the tour operators and the guides but requested that the Government should also consider giving one-time financial grant to all recognised tour operators.”

Reacting to the announcement, Mr. Ashok Sharda, Past President, Tourist Guides Federation of India said, “Decision by the tourism ministry to provide some financial assistance to regional guides and exempt visa fee to first 5 lac tourists is a welcome step Regional guides who have been unemployed for the last 15 months were hoping for some relief from the ministry. It may not be substantial but good to know that we have not been orphaned”

Expressing satisfaction on this move of the Government, Ms. Ekta Watts, Executive Committee member of Association of Domestic Tour Operators of India (ADTOI) & Chairperson Women empowerment CSR activity and LEO Initiator said “A very positive step by Finance Ministry to announce financial support for the tourism sector under reviving tourism scheme. This surely is appreciated and long awaited move by the government which will definitely give travel industry revitalization”

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